



PRESS RELEASE

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Kitty Hawk searches for “Biggest Losers”

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Randy Lane, Kitty Hawk public affairs

USS KITTY HAWK, At Sea -- To help Sailors aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) learn more about fitness and nutrition while engaging in friendly competition, the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) hosted a “Biggest Loser” contest, which ended August 6.

Teams of four competed against each other to see which group could lose the most weight in a safe and healthy manner. After six weeks of competition, Team 4, made up of engineers from Main Machinery Room No. 2, racked up 118.5 points to win the competition.

Chad Quinn, Kitty Hawk's afloat fitness director, said the program is an adaptation of the popular TV show “The Biggest Loser.” The object was still to see who could lose the most weight in a set period, but Kitty Hawk participants came together as teams of four instead of competing individually. Every week the teams were measured and weighed, and each inch or pound lost was one point added to the overall score.

Machinist's Mate 3rd Class Joe Maggard, a member of Team 4, also known as the “Four Horsemen,” said working together was key to winning the competition.

“We decided on a strict diet of no carbohydrates, soda or candy,” said Maggard. “Also, we each ran at least two miles daily. If any one member needed motivating, the whole group came together to keep him on track.”

Machinist's Mate 2nd Class (SW/AW) Gabriel Sinner, the group's unofficial leader, said one of the hardest places to count calories was while on liberty in a foreign port. His team allotted themselves one “cheat” day while in port to eat and drink whatever they wanted. Once the ship left port, the Four Horsemen went back to their diet and exercise routine.

Quinn said that while six weeks is not enough time for some people to see drastic changes, hopefully the results of each individual are enough to keep them motivated to continue after the program is over.

“I had one participant come up and tell me how much more energy he’s had since starting the program,” said Quinn. “He was excited about having the energy to go play with his kid when we pull back into port.”

In addition to shedding inches and pounds, weekly competitions helped teams add more points to their score. One of the competitions was a 10 kilometer relay race using treadmills in the ship’s gym. Each teammate took their turn running 1.5 kilometers, and all the times were added together to form an overall score.

“Winning first place in the 10K relay race definitely helped out our final score,” said Maggard. “Just trying to lose weight would get a little boring, but competing against all the other teams kept things interesting.”

Sinner said that seeing the benefits of this program has motivated him and his team to keep up their diet and exercise program even after their win.

“It’d be hard not to stick with it after losing 15 pounds,” he said. “Also, I feel better than I have in three or four years. When the Physical Fitness Assessment rolls around I’m sure my teammates and I will pass with flying colors.”

Quinn said that many Sailors who enrolled in the program were not regular visitors to the gym, but signed up after being encouraged by friends and co-workers.

“Now, I see these same people in the gym coming up to me excited about the progress they’re making,” said Quinn. “It’s really great to see people getting excited about fitness, especially people who didn’t make it a priority before.”

In addition to Maggard and Sinner, the Four Horsemen team also included Machinist’s Mate 2nd Class Gabriel Loop and Machinist’s Mate Fireman Chris Deese. Teams 7 and 12 tied for second place with a score of 88.5 points.

Altogether, the ship’s 68 participants lost a total of 383 pounds and 302.5 inches, making for a leaner and meaner Navy.

The Kitty Hawk Strike Group is the largest carrier strike group in the Navy and is composed of the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, the guided-missile cruisers USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) and USS Cowpens (CG 63), and Destroyer Squadron 15.

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